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February 3, 2023

VIA ECF

Hon. Edmond E. Chang
District Judge
United States District Court
Northern District of Illinois
Eastern Division
Courtroom 2341
Everett McKinley Dirksen
United States Courthouse
219 South Dearborn St.
Chicago, IL 60604

**Re: *Richardson v. Northwestern University, et al.* Case No. 1:21-cv-00522
Request For Initial Status Conference**

Dear Judge Chang,

The undersigned represents Plaintiff Hayden Richardson (“Plaintiff”) in the above referenced action. We submit this correspondence to request that the Court set deadlines for the submission of a joint status report and an Initial Status Conference. Alternatively, we respectfully request a conference call with the Court and all parties to discuss the commencement of discovery in this action.

Plaintiff filed the Complaint on January 29, 2021. By minute order dated March 4, 2021, the Court set an April 15, 2021 submission date for the parties’ joint status report. On March 9, 2021, the parties filed a joint motion to extend the time for Defendants to file their responsive pleadings and to establish a briefing schedule for Defendants’ motions to dismiss. By minute order dated March 9, 2021, the Court set a briefing schedule for the motions. The March 9 order further adjourned *sine die* the deadline for submitting a joint status report. Since March 9, 2021, the parties have not exchanged initial disclosures, held a Rule 26(f) conference or engaged in any discovery. The parties have engaged in no discussions about settlement.

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Hon. Edmond E. Chang
Page 2 of 3

Defendants' motions to dismiss were fully briefed as of September 14, 2021. Supplemental filings were also submitted as of September 14, 2021. Defendant Northwestern University (the "University") did not move to dismiss the first two counts of the Complaint alleging violations of Title IX. Accordingly, there is no doubt that those claims should proceed to discovery.

On November 11, 2022, Kara Gorycki, Plaintiff's counsel, contacted Anna Wermuth, the University's counsel, by email to arrange a call to discuss getting started on the exchange of document discovery with the University as related to Plaintiff's Title IX claims. Ms. Wermuth agreed to schedule a call but asserted that she was not convinced that "piecemeal" discovery would make sense. In response, Ms. Gorycki asserted that discovery would not be piecemeal since there would be significant overlap in what would be relevant to the Title IX and trafficking claims alleged in the Complaint. Ms. Gorycki emailed Ms. Wermuth on November 21, 2022, December 5, 2022, and December 12, 2022 but was unable to schedule a call. Ms. Wermuth emailed Ms. Gorycki on Friday, December 23, 2022 to set up a call for the following week. Ms. Gorycki was out of the office from December 23, 2022 through January 9, 2023. On January 13, 2023, Ms. Gorycki once again emailed Ms. Wermuth to set up a call to discuss the commencement of document discovery. As of the date of this letter, Ms. Wermuth has not responded.

Given that a significant amount of time has passed since the action was filed, and the inability of Plaintiff's counsel to have even a preliminary conversation with the University's counsel about starting discovery, Plaintiff respectfully requests that the Court set deadlines for the submission of a joint status report and an Initial Status Conference. Alternatively, we respectfully request a conference call with the Court and all parties to discuss the commencement of discovery in this action.

Respectfully Submitted,

/s/ Kara L. Gorycki

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Hon. Edmond E. Chang
Page 3 of 3

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